

BEAR ON THE SQUARE MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL

April 18 & 19, 2026



DETAILS

	MAINSTAGE TENT	HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS (32 E Main St.)	Zak McConnell Stage at HANCOCK PARK	VICKERY HOUSE
SATURDAY				
10AM	10-10:30 Storytelling with Debbie & Hannah Sage From			
11AM	10:30-12 Sarah Kate Morgan and Leo Shannon	Flatfoot Dance (Maggie Holder)	STORYTELLING 11-11:30 Nancy Reeder (as Grandma Gatewood) 12-12:30 Josie Bailey, Nancy Reeder 1-1:30 Ryan Davis (Youth Teller), Josie Bailey 2-3:00 OPEN MIC with Denise & Mike Mount	
12PM	12:15-1:45 Five Mile Mountain Road	Singing with Fiddle Tunes (Max Godfrey & Maggie Hall)		
1PM		Old-Time Slow Jam (Ann Whitley Singleton & John Day)		
2PM	2-3:30 Curtis & Kim Jones Mountain Gypsy Music	Sacred Harp Singing (Esther Morgan-Ellis)		
3PM	3:45 to 5:15 The Solstice Sisters	Bluegrass Banjo (Trevor Holder)	Old-Time Fiddle (Billy Hurt)	Concert: The Four O'Clocks
4PM	5:30-6:45 Ugly Cousin	Bass (Austin Janey)	Old-Time Guitar (Conner Vlietstra)	
5PM		Bluegrass Slow Jam (Bill Long)	Jazz Guitar (Brennen Ernst)	
6PM				
7PM	7:00 Square Dance			
SUNDAY				
11AM	11-12:15 Glenda Pender Gospel Jam			
12PM				
1PM	1-2:30 Bells and Whistles	Harmony Singing (The Solstice Sisters)	Clogging (Cindy Barnes)	
2PM	2:45-4:15 Reedy River String Band	New Old-Time Tunes (Andy Howard)	Ballad Singing (Hannah From)	
3PM		Pickin' Porch Jam	Concert: Rusty Rooster String Band	
4PM	4:30: Pick & Bow Traditional Music School			



MARKETPLACE EXHIBITORS

MARKETPLACE HOURS: 10-6 Saturday, 10-5 Sunday

PAINTING/ DRAWING

Mike Denier
Jim Humphrey
Pete & Allie Kirby
Jeffree Lerner
Daniel L'Esperance
Chris McLaughlin
Lily Payne
Jon Schaubhut

LEATHER

Dylan Britt
Sarah Brown
Tom Slavicek

JEWELRY

Evie Kitchens
Dione Lerner
Lena McDonald
Lynn Reeder
Caroline Sandlin
Brenda Steele

PHOTOGRAPHY

Brent McGuirt
Danny Young

POTTERY

Trina Cline
Suzanne Mae Evans
Deanne Freeman
Julie Isaacs

FIBER ARTS

Jordan Adams
Susan Crowe
Nazare Hoffpauir
Ashley Houston
Jackie Oleski
Cindy Petty
Lynda Pollard
Tina & Tim Rice
Sarah Thomson
Ashley Thornton
Amy Wade

METAL

Donna & Tim Frady
Andy Hamilton
Sheila Hamilton
Chris Hicks
Jackie Kimmel
Judy, John & Lane
Ziegler

WOODWORKING

Joseph Bedell
Richard Brooke III
Don Hermann
Alan Johnson
Chris Ketchum
Sean Lawford
Will & Kim Manning
Drew Oxford
Craig Pence
Gordon Stephenson

MIXED MEDIA & MISCELLANEOUS

David Bailey
Jimmy Loudermilk
John Lundy
Jenny Moore
Christine Smith
Rae-Lynne Swigart

GLASSWORKING

Leslie & Danny
Grejean
Katie Knopf
John Quesnell

CONSUMABLES

Carrie Andrews
Rebecca Benfield
Phillip Christopher
Jim Crabtree
Jessica Kotter
Trevor & Joanna
Mann
Jill Phillips
Rick Sterba

ALSO IN MARKETPLACE

Georgia Pick & Bow
Traditional Music
School
John C. Campbell
Folk School

LOCATED IN HANCOCK PARK

Ga Mtn Fiber Arts
Guild
Georgia K9 Search
and Recovery

FOOD COURT, NORTH PARK ST.

- Black Market Barbecue
- Greek Tavern
- Hillbilly Cafe
- N & W Concessions
- Osterman's Artisan Sausage
- Red Hills Catering
- R&H Boiled Peanuts
- Hillbilly Soda Shack
- Split Tea Co. - Smoothies & Boba Pears
- Miss Judy's Shaved Ice & Pretzel Company
- RX Refreshments & Fresh Squeezed Lemonade
- Crumbl Cookies

FESTIVAL DEDICATIONS



Norman Adams

A resident of Dahlonega, Norman was a life-long promoter of bluegrass music and was, along with his wife, Judy, honored for that in 2020 by the International Bluegrass Music Association. He was a long-time sponsor and supporter of Bear. He passed away July 15, 2025.

John Kelley

John was possibly the most recognized Bear attendee ever as he walked the festival grounds year after year with his dog Toby sitting on his shoulders. He was a traditional music enthusiast and for more than 12 years hosted Bear's Saturday night Old-Time Mountain Dance. He passed away August 18, 2025.



NOTE TO JAMMERS

Visit the Bear Pickin' Station on the west lawn of the Gold Museum and join in or just enjoy the jamming around the square day and night. Musicians: As a courtesy to our merchants, please do not block their store entrances.

FREE WORKSHOPS & JAMS

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS

- 11 am: Flatfoot Dance (Holiday Inn):** Maggie Holder will share her unique flatfoot style with festivalgoers. All levels are welcome at this interactive workshop!
- 12 pm: Singing with Fiddle Tunes (Holiday Inn):** Local duo Max & Maggie love to sing while they play, and they also love to share their music with others. All are welcome to play, sing, or listen.
- 2 pm: Sacred Harp Singing (Holiday Inn):** Sacred Harp singing is a Georgia tradition that dates back to 1844. Learn about the tradition and join in the singing. No experience necessary.
- 3 pm: Bluegrass Banjo (Holiday Inn):** Trevor Holder is an award-winning banjo player ready to share some techniques.
- 3 pm: Old-Time Fiddle (Hancock Park):** Billy Hurt will share tunes and techniques for old-time fiddlers of all levels.
- 4 pm: Bass (Holiday Inn):** Austin Janey welcomes all at this workshop, which will equip you to hold down the bottom end in any jam.
- 4 pm: Old-Time Guitar (Hancock Park):** Conner Vlietstra will share approaches to old-time guitar that will make your playing stand out!
- 5 pm: Jazz Guitar (Hancock Park):** Brennan Ernst will introduce the fundamentals of jazz guitar playing and help you integrate these techniques into your style.

SUNDAY WORKSHOPS

- 1 pm: Clogging (Hancock Park):** Cindy Barnes' workshop will feature live fiddle accompaniment as she teaches all the basic steps you need to start dancing!
- 1 pm: Harmony Singing (Holiday Inn):** The Solstice Sisters of Athens, GA are perennial favorites at Bear on the Square. Come learn how they blend their voices so beautifully, and even sing along!

- 2 pm: New Old-Time Tunes (Holiday Inn):** Musicians actually write new fiddle tunes all the time. Come learn a few of the best ones from Andy Howard!
- 2 pm: Ballad Singing (Hancock Park):** Hannah From is a professional banjo player and singer. She will share traditional ballads and stories from the Southern Appalachians.

CONCERTS

- 3 pm Saturday, The Four O' Clocks (Vickery House):** Max Godfrey, Maggie Hall, Jenna Mobley, and Jeremy Aggers form this traditional old-time string band from Atlanta.
- 3 pm: Sunday, Concert: Rusty Rooster String Band (Hancock Park):** The Rusty Rooster String Band is made up of current UNG students. Enjoy their selection of bluegrass favorites, crossover songs from other genres, and original compositions.

OPEN JAMS — *All are welcome!*

SATURDAY

- 1 pm: Old-Time Slow Jam**
5 pm: Bluegrass Slow Jame

SUNDAY

- 3 pm: Pickin' Porch Old-Time Jam**

DO FEED THE BEAR, PLEASE!

Bear is looking for handouts! As our costs rise year after year, our goal is to continue to host an outstanding free festival. If you are enjoying yourself, please make a donation to one of the many Feed the Bear buckets you will see around the festival.

Feed the Bear HERE!





BEAR AMBASSADORS

Welcome to Bear on the Square. Do you have questions? Need directions or suggestions? Festival Ambassadors are available to help. Look for the volunteers in green vests or in the information area in front of the Welcome Center on the square. They will be glad to answer questions and direct you to the various attractions. Many of them also speak another language.

FIRST AID & FESTIVAL INFO

Bruised knee? Insect bite? Sunburn?? Stop by the First Aid/Festival Information station located at the pavilion in front of the Visitors Center on the square for some medical attention and TLC provided by volunteers from North GA Physicians Group staff. Local EMTs are also roaming the festival to help festival goers as needed.

REST ROOMS

Rest rooms are available at the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Visitors Center on the square and in the back of the stage in Hancock Park. Porta potties are available throughout the venue as pictured on the map above.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found is located in the MainStage Tent at the Merchandise table. Any items left after the festival will be taken to the Welcome Center for pick up Monday.

FESTIVAL SPONSORS

Miss Moonshine • Big Creek Distillery • Adams & Logan Insurance Agency
University of North Georgia • Shenanigans Irish Pub • Brown Haven Homes
John C. Campbell Folk School • Leafguard • Hunt & Taylor Law Group • T3 Event Rentals
Lynn Young • Appalachian Contracting Services • W & W Mushroom & Seeds • Dahlonega Arts Alliance
Chestatee Artists • United Community Bank • Gold Mine Radio • Forum Communications